

**TOWN OF BASALT
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING
Tuesday, May 18, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 6:09 pm.

Commissioners present included Bill Maron, Kyle Oberkoetter, Eric Vozick, Bernie Grauer, Rob Leavitt and Alternate Cindy Hirschfeld.

Staff present included Susan Philp, Planning Director; James Lindt, Assistant Planning Director; and Catherine Christoff, Town Engineer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M/S VOZICK AND LEAVITT TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 20, 2021. MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF 6 TO 0.

AGENDA ITEMS

Public Hearing – Lot 4 Public Works Facility

Philp introduced the item as a public hearing regarding the Town-owned property in the Mid-Valley Center. She said that Boyd Bierbaum, Public Works Director, is present on the call, and Town Engineer Catherine Christoff will be presenting.

Philp said she was interested in providing some history of the Town's Public Works facilities. Currently Public Works operates primarily out of the lot in Southside, and there are many Public Works sites throughout town, such as the old Eagle County shop building off Sopris Drive. Philp said Public Works previously stored a lot of equipment in a building at Crown Mountain Park, but the roof was failing, and the Town was no longer able to use the site. The issue is that the Public Works operations exceed its current available space.

Philp explained that through the years the Town has looked at a number of sites for a Public Works facility and ended up purchasing the Shelton drilling site. The Town closed on the purchase of that property in January of this year. A land use application has been created which will take the design of the lot through the P&Z and the Town Council.

Bierbaum added that the current facility was set up before Southside developed and well before Willits had expanded to what it is today. He said that Public Works needed an additional operational base and that this lot, with its proximity to Willits, allows equipment (snowplow, street sweeper, etc.) to easily access different areas of Basalt.

Philp added that the Town Manager wanted to emphasize how valuable every square inch of space is on this site. She said the site plan shows how the use of the site is being maximized to the extent possible.

Christoff introduced herself as the Town Engineer. She shared her screen to orient the P&Z to the location of the site. Christoff indicated the site is Lot 4 of the Mid-Valley PUD, accessed off of Highway 82. She said it is the former site of the Shelton Drilling Company's base of operations. The site measures 1.17 acres and is served by an existing well and septic system.

Christoff said the Town is proposing to develop the site as a Public Works base of operation. To make the project cost effective it is planned to occur in three phases. Phase 1 includes improvements to the access. The parcel is currently accessed from Highway 82 and there are not clear access points to the site or neighboring Umbrella Roofing Company. Christoff said that part of the access improvements will include changing the now one-way access to a two-way access and moving the site and Umbrella Roofing Company's access south away from the current four-way intersection.

Christoff said the Town already has obtained an access permit from CDOT. She showed a site plan that indicated where an existing trailer will be moved to the rear of the site, and where a new pole barn is proposed to be constructed at the western rear edge of the site. She indicated an area toward the western front edge of the site where storage bins will be constructed. Christoff said the well on-site will be abandoned to the extent that it serves domestic uses but will continue to use it for irrigation of landscaping on the property. The site will be connected to Mid-Valley Metro District for both water and sewer.

Christoff said that in Phase 2 will involve the elimination of the trailer and the construction of a structure with ground floor garage and second floor office space. Phase 3 will only occur if Widget Street is extended through the property. Christoff explained that as part of CDOT's Access Control Plan, a future connection is identified through the intersection with East Valley Road, down the subject property line, and through the adjacent Eagle County parcel that abuts Willits Lane. She said that Phase 3 is not imminent but may occur at a future time.

Christoff noted that the application was referred out to Eagle County who has some comments about placing an access easement in the area where a future street (identified in Phase 3) would be constructed. She said that Staff feels that the easement should be delayed to when it is actually needed. She noted that the major improvements to the site avoid the corridor so that improvements such as utilities can be accommodated in the future.

Christoff said they also received referral comments from Roaring Fork Fire Authority and Mid-Valley Metro District. She noted that the Fire Authority supported the application and were pleased with the improvements planned to the site's access. Mid-Valley Metro District was also supportive overall, and Staff is still working with them on some of their technical comments around connection to utilities. Christoff said Staff also received a letter from the owner of the neighboring lot (Lot 3, Mid-Valley Center PUD) who is also supportive of the proposal. She reported that Philp spoke with a representative of Lot 2 and the Aspen Skiing Company who own property just past Umbrella Roofing Company and both were supportive of the application as well.

Christoff said that Staff has proposed a number of conditions which include that the Applicant must build to the representation and record any necessary documents and the uses of the site are to be updated to adequately reflect the Public Works facility. Christoff explained that the application discusses reducing a setback due to a perimeter fence that will be constructed on-site. She said that in order to accommodate the fence the 20-foot setback will need to be reduced to 16 feet. The affordable housing mitigation requirements have been met through recent affordable housing purchases. A condition was added to meet the conditions of the Mid-Valley Metro District and Roaring Fork Fire Authority's referral comments.

Commissioner Oberkoetter asked for clarification on the current access road. Christoff explained that the access is currently one-way which is proposed to be changed to a two-way access and widened. Commissioner Oberkoetter said that he doubts that anyone knows that it is actually only a one-way road and Christoff agreed, saying that is one of the safety concerns. Philp noted that the access is for driving in, not for driving out, although there is a stop sign posted for vehicles exiting the area. She said this is likely why the Fire Authority and neighboring property owners are so supportive of the application. Philp said that there will also be some trimming of the trees around the sidewalk that leads to the bus stop to enhance the pedestrian experience there.

Philp said that the original PUD was designed as a senior care facility with a land lease owned by Shelton Drilling Company. At the time, the drilling business was still operational on the subject site. The setbacks, buffers and variances were established within the PUD approvals, but nothing was really done with Lot 4. When the Wynn Institute came in for development parking was a significant issue. As a result, Shelton Drilling Company ended up giving an easement on Lot 4 to build the head-in parking along the shared boundary with Lot 3 and install a sidewalk. Philp said that normally there might be a landscape buffer between the two lots, but eleven feet is already taken up with parking and a sidewalk. She said the Town is proposing to increase the sidewalk width by an additional five feet to bring it up to ten feet in width. Currently when a vehicle is parked it leaves no real room to utilize the sidewalk. The expanded sidewalk will render it useable when vehicles are parked in the adjacent parking spaces. Philp indicated that the sidewalk is essentially serving a network of bandit trails in that area. The landscaping on the site will be moved up toward the entry of the site, and the dead trees that can be seen from Original Road will be removed as part of the access improvement plan.

Philp said that Staff is hoping to leave with a recommendation from the P&Z. The matter is scheduled to go before the Town Council on June 8th and 22nd. The Town received a fairly substantial grant from DOLA for the project to make the improvements. Philp added that Staff had some meetings with Holy Cross and CORE when they were putting together the application to make it as green as possible, noting that it helps to use well water and put solar panels on the pole barn and new building once constructed. Staff is also talking with Holy Cross about using the area for battery storage.

Commissioner Oberkoetter asked if there were any studies or consideration of the sound that may come from operating heavy machinery and its impacts on the adjacent residential units. Christoff responded that from her understanding the early morning operations would be for snowplowing, and it is mostly performed using pickup trucks rather than heavy machinery. Bierbaum added

that the current Public Works facility is also adjacent to residential and they have never received any complaints related to noise. He said that Staff picks up the vehicles and then are out and about – they are not at the site for any extended periods of times. Equipment is loaded and then they leave so that a big disturbance is not made early in the morning.

Commissioner Vozick asked it is possible to extend fiber optics to neighbors of the property. Christoff said they are actively working with Holy Cross on that alignment, adjacent to the trailer park's property. They are beginning discussions on how the trailer park may access that line and for others to use that utility once it is brought in.

Philp added that the Town has been working on a number of fiber projects. This one is to have leased fiber from Holy Cross, and those in the area can also lease from Holy Cross. Philp clarified that the conversations to date have been with the Aspen Skiing Company and not the mobile home park, but Staff can reach out to the mobile home park once the alignment is secured near Original Road.

Commissioner Vozick asked if the solar panels on the pole barn could be installed in the first phase rather than the second, and Philp responded that they will be installed in the first phase.

Commissioner Vozick asked if any consideration had been given to the installation of electric vehicle charging stations within the facility. Philp said that moving the fleet vehicles to all-electric was being discussed with Holy Cross. She said there is a state requirement about matching solar panels on a site to the need, and so the discussion with CORE and Holy Cross was about how to ensure the future charging stations would be adequately served by the solar panels on the site.

Commissioner Vozick asked what is happening to the Public Works Facility in Southside. Bierbaum indicated that Public Works would still maintain that property as a base of operations for East Basalt.

Commissioner Hirschfeld asked if any of the existing Public Works facilities will be decommissioned in order to move to this site. Bierbaum said that with the end of the use of the Crown Mountain space Public Works has had to store some equipment in Merino Park. He said the Sopris Drive Annex is also in a bit of rough shape, although it does house some diesel equipment. The plan is to keep the east facility (Southside) and get the west Basalt facility up and running, and then take stock of what Public Works' needs are at that time.

Commissioner Hirschfeld asked if the new facility will accommodate the Town's needs for the foreseeable future, and asked if it will allow room for future growth. Bierbaum replied that he believes the new facility will enable Public Works to maintain the Town and new development with the addition of the facility.

Commissioner Leavitt asked if there is room for additional solar panels on this site in the future. Philp indicated that the project will be maximizing the solar potential for the site between the two proposed buildings. She said there may be the potential for impact with the commercial battery storage for electricity which could be fed back into the grid.

Commissioner Grauer said the need is apparent and appreciates the opportunity to clean up the access to the site.

Chair Maron said there has been a high level of concern from the Willits Bend HOA regarding a pedestrian connection from Willits Bend to the RFTA bus stop. Philp said they have met with the developer of Willits Bend and acknowledged the amount of pedestrian traffic coming through from Willits Lane. There is more work to do to formalize an easement for that connection. The Town has encouraged it on the subject site with the sidewalk and planned improvements. The Town is also going to improve the pedestrian connection across the access drive to get to the bus stop. Philp said that Staff has also had conversations with the Aspen Skiing Company as they were approached about opportunities for pedestrian access through the KOA property. Aspen Skiing Company is receptive to people moving through the area, but since the true long-term use of the KOA property is not determined by the Aspen Skiing Company, they do not want to put anything permanent on the record. Philp said that Staff is working on making those connections.

Chair Maron opened the meeting to public comment at 6:43 pm. No member of the public indicated they were interested in speaking. Chair Maron closed the public hearing at 6:45 pm.

Commissioner Comments

Chair Maron said that the Public Works Facility is much needed and expressed his appreciation for the plan.

M/S LEAVITT AND GRAUER TO RECOMMEND TO TOWN COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THE APPLICATION WITH THE CONDITIONS IN THE STAFF MEMO. MOTION PASSED 6 TO 0.

Discussion and Vote for Chair and Vice-Chair of the P&Z

Philp said that in October 2020 Bill Maron was re-appointed as Chair and Eric Vozick as Vice Chair. The Code suggests that appointments take place in May, and it was agreed that the P&Z would revisit the topic and get back on a May schedule. Philp said that the P&Z can keep the status quo and elect the Chair and the Vice Chair or discuss if someone else is interested in becoming the P&Z Chair or Vice Chair.

Philp explained that the role of the Chair is to preside at the meetings and sign the documents, such as Resolutions and Meeting Minutes, and address procedural issues. The Vice chair steps in when the Chair is not able to be at the meeting. Chair Maron added that the Chair acts as an impromptu liaison between the Council and the P&Z to try and create or rally for joint meetings when they are necessary.

Chair Maron said he is perfectly happy with maintaining his position if the P&Z allows him to do so. Commissioner Vozick said he is also happy to keep his position as Vice Chair. He said if the P&Z would prefer change that he is all for that as well.

Commissioner Leavitt asked if the P&Z is having a proper election tonight, given that some of the members are missing. Philp indicated that it could be moved to the next meeting if the P&Z did

not want to have the election at this meeting. The Code speaks to May elections, and the P&Z has a quorum.

Commissioner Grauer indicated he would like to have the vote at tonight's meeting. Commissioner Vozick added that Commissioners Grauer and Leavitt have been on the Commission for some time now and he would also be comfortable with voting either of them in if they were interested.

Five of the six P&Z members indicated they were interested in holding the vote at the meeting.

M/S GRAUER AND HIRSCHFELD TO APPOINT MARON AS THE P&Z CHAIR AND VOZICK AS THE P&Z VICE CHAIR.

Commissioner Leavitt asked for the motion to be repealed for further discussion. Commissioner Grauer asked to call for the motion. Commissioner Hirschfeld repealed her second in the motion.

The P&Z and Staff engaged in a discussion of the correct way to vote on the motion. Chair Maron asked for some direction from Staff as to the mechanics of how to vote. It was decided that this vote would take place at the next meeting and give Staff a chance to develop a method to direct the P&Z through the process.

M/S OBERKOETTER AND LEAVITT TO CONTINUE THE VOTE FOR CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR TO THE NEXT P&Z MEETING WHERE STAFF WILL RETURN WITH A METHOD TO DIRECT THE PROCESS. THE MOTION PASSED 5 TO 1.

Discuss Worksession with Council

Philp said a worksession with the Town Council has been scheduled for May 25th. There is nothing urgent, but a few months back the P&Z expressed a desire to meet with the Town Council more frequently.

Chair Maron asked the Commission if they have an opinion about meeting in person or via Zoom. Commissioner Leavitt said he supports the meeting with Council particularly given the article in the paper about the proposed development on the Clark's Market parcel. Commissioner Grauer said he would like to meet with Council and would like to have it hosted virtually. He would like Chair Maron to provide input on what the P&Z would like to see covered at the meeting, as well as get input from Council, then create a mutually agreed-upon agenda so time is not wasted. Chair Maron said that Staff should circulate a draft agenda. He said that Master Plan implementation is an important item.

Commissioner Vozick noted that the previous joint meeting was more of a meet and greet. He was unsure of having a discussion around the Master Plan items, as that is currently being undertaken by the Capital Needs Committee.

Philp said that she is looking to the P&Z for topics of discussion. She said they can discuss such topics as the P&Z's vision of downtown as taken from the Master Plan but must be wary of

discussions of actual land use applications that can give the appearance of prejudging that application.

Commissioner Grauer said he would like to hear from the Council regarding whether they have any concrete goals and objectives for affordable housing.

A discussion ensued regarding ensuring the meeting does not look to replicate the work that the Capital Needs Committee will be doing. Chair Maron opined that the P&Zs meeting with Council would focus on asking questions, whereas the Capital Needs Committee will be answering questions.

Philp said that the Council is committed to letting the Capital Needs Committee do its work. The role of the P&Z is to help guide the discussion from the P&Zs point of view. She suggested a useful role of the P&Z on the Capital Needs Committee is to reiterate the work and public input that went into the Master Plan process. Chair Maron agreed and expressed that he does not want the work done on the Master Plan forgotten.

Philp responded that she would work on a draft agenda. She said the worksession with Council will be on May 25th at 5:00 pm, prior to the regular Council meeting, via Zoom. Commissioner Leavitt asked if this could be pushed back a few weeks until in-person meetings can happen. Chair Maron said that he does not want to lose time in front of Council, which is already scheduled.

Commissioner Grauer expressed his reluctance to meet in-person.

The P&Z agreed that they would proceed with the scheduled meeting via Zoom next week.

Staff Updates and Commissioner Comments

Philp said that the application for development of the old Clark's Market site is in and has been sent out for referral. An application has also been received for Sopris Meadows Parcel 5. Staff is working on approvals for the Basalt River Park restaurant and finalizing some other approval documents for the site. The carwash and Stott's Mill are moving forward, and the pool is moving along.

Lindt said construction is likely starting adjacent to the River Park along Two Rivers road in the upcoming weeks. Park will get out to bid soon for park itself. Philp said utility work is being done at the park.

Commissioner Leavitt asked for some details regarding the Town's upcoming recycling event. Philp replied that it will take place on Saturday June 26th at the high school. Items that can be dropped off will include appliances, electronics, tires, and more. It will be advertised as an event for Basalt and El Jebel residents.

Commissioner Vozick said the Capital Needs Committee had their first meeting yesterday, which was an introduction for participants and setting up the process. He said that his take-away is the emphasis placed on the Master Plan and efforts, and the group will be digging into the thirteen primary projects that were voted on by the public as priority projects for the Town. Commissioner

Vozick said that if there are particular items the P&Z wants him to discuss as the representative for the P&Z to please let him know. The Committee will begin meeting every other week, beginning next week.

Commissioner Leavitt asked Lindt how many permits are currently in for single-family homes. Lindt replied that he would need to check in with Rick at the Building Department. He just knows that there are over 50 building permits currently.

Commissioner Oberkoetter asked for an update on the Tree Farm. Philp said she does not have any additional information on the project at this time.

Chair Maron thanked Staff for their work during this busy time.

M/S VOZICK AND LEAVITT TO ADJOURN. MOTION PASSES 6 to 0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:27 pm.

TOWN OF BASALT
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

By: 
William C. Maron, Chair

Attest: 
Susan Philp, Planning Director